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SPEECHES

OF

THE WARDEN OF KEBLE COLLEGE, OXFORD,

AND OF

THE EARL BEAUCHAMP,

AT THE LAYING OF

THE FOUNDATION STONE

OF

THE COLLEGE CHAPEL

BY

WILLIAM GIBBS, ESQ., ON ST. MARK'S DAY, 1873.

OXFORD :

J VINCENT, 90, HIGH STREET.

MDCCCLXXIII.



KEBLE COLLEGE EXTENSION FUND.

With a view to carrying out at once some of the objects for which the Warden appealed in the following Speech, the Warden and Council have opened a “KEBLE COLLEGE EXTENSION FUND.”

They propose to raise a sum of £15,000, to erect Buildings for 36 additional Students, and a suitable House for the Warden.

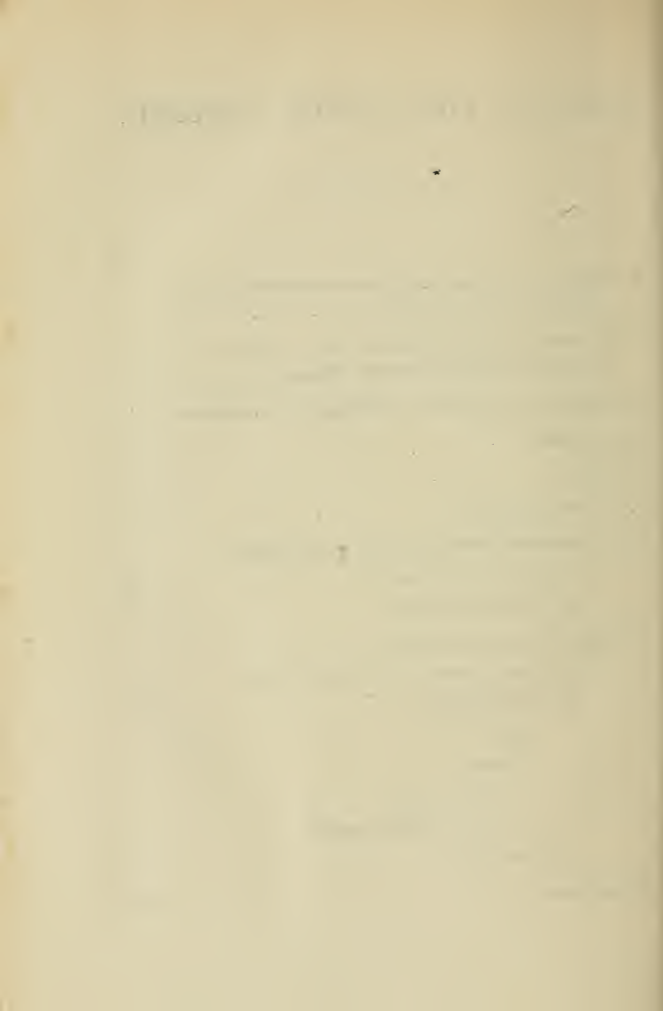
Subscriptions for this Fund are received by the Bursar, Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. W. E. Sackville West, Keble College, Oxford, by the Warden, any Member of Council, or any of the Tutors, or may be paid direct to the Fund at either of the undermentioned Banks—

MESSRS. HERRIES, FARQUHAR & CO.,
16, *St. James Street, London, S.W.*

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Old Bank, Oxford.

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S P E E C H E S .

THE WARDEN of KEBLE COLLEGE said,—I am asked to address to you a few words before we break up to-day. The fact that I am called upon to do so in this way, without a meeting and other speakers, reminds me of the difference between this present occasion and the last when I spoke in the present Quadrangle in the year 1870. At that time we were all of us who were then gathered together strangers I may say in this place. Now you come here as our guests, and we welcome you to that which is to many of us a well-loved home. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Then, all that belonged to this place was in the future, all was a matter of hope, and although the gathering of that day was certainly a very bright augury for the future, yet in the future everything still remained. But now, although we look forward to the future, and hope for this College from the future much more than the past has brought, yet there is also a past behind us and a present in which we are—a past and a present of which the importance is the greater when we remember that upon it, and partaking of its character for good or evil, the future of the College must be built. (Hear, hear.) And it was thought that on this occasion it would be well if I rose to give to you some account

§1. Preliminary—
Purpose chiefly
to sketch For-
tunes of the Col-
lege since Open-
ing in 1870.

of what we have done in this place, and what we are doing at the present moment. You will forgive me then, if, on the part of the College, I am to-day thoroughly egotistical, that is to say, if I occupy your time entirely with a statement of our own concerns.

§ 2. The Statute of New Foundations, 1870. Admission of the College to relations with the University.

First, going back to that year 1870, one great anxiety which was before us was the question of the relation of the College to the University. By the favour of her Majesty and her advisers, we had received a Royal Charter, which gave us our name, and in a sense, our position as Keble College; but what view the University would take of our position—what relation we should bear to the University—was still a matter entirely in suspense. In the October Term which followed the gathering in this place that question was set at rest by what is called the Statute for the Admission of New Foundations. I will not go now into a technical matter, but I will say just this, that I think by the Statute of New Foundations the question of the relation of this place and other places which may hereafter be built with regard to the University was equitably settled. That statute, practically, admits all members of this College to the same position, and the same rights in Oxford, as the members of all other Colleges, and I defy any stranger who comes into Oxford and acquires even a very fair acquaintance with her concerns, to discover any difference between Keble College and its members, and other Colleges

and their members. (Hear, hear.) Such differences as there are relating to the Headship I may be allowed to pass over, simply saying that the present Head of Keble College has found no serious difficulty accruing to him from them. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) That statute was arrived at after a certain amount of debate and contest in the University, and to which I just allude not, believe me, with a view of dwelling on the opposition, because I think that the opposition was exaggerated in the country, but rather because I wish to refer to the very kind and generous spirit with which the statute so introduced was received in the University. (Hear, hear.) It was not only supported by those whom I may call the friends of the College, but it was supported by the great bulk of the Liberal party in the University, which, if I may be allowed for a moment to use party terms, was true to the Liberal principle that all persons should be allowed to carry out their views without hindrance, so long as those views are not detrimental to the community at large. (Hear, hear.) I would add that since that time this conduct has been amply borne out by the social courtesies which have been in all ways extended to us.

This having been done, and the College having been connected with the University, we began, in October Term, 1870, our quiet and ordinary course of life in this place; and when I come to speak of the time which has passed between then and now, it seems to me that perhaps I had better

§ 3. Four difficulties in the work of the College—how overcome—
 (a) Finance
 (b) Staff
 (c) Undergraduates
 (d) Fulfilment of Special Objects of the College.

put before you four difficulties or dangers which the friends of the College then had to fear, and say a word or two respecting the way in which they have been met. The first question was whether the College would pay its way and be self-supporting; the second whether it could obtain persons of sufficient ability and good-will to work as its staff of Tutors; thirdly, there was the question, and a very important one, whether we could get men to fill the College; and fourthly, there was the question whether it could in any degree carry out the special objects for which it had been built.

§ 4. a. Finance

Taking the first of these, the one of Finance, whether the College could be self-supporting and pay its way, I think in a very few words I can show you the proof of that. It was thought right by the very wise and careful persons who were engaged in building the College and setting it on foot, to organise a Sustentation Fund, and the object was that the charges having been calculated to carry on the College when filled with 100 members, it was naturally supposed that with 30 members to start with there would be a deficit and a loss. But from that Sustentation Fund not a penny, I believe, has ever been drawn, and the money which was then collected for that purpose now stands before you, by the consent of its givers, in the shape of bricks and mortar.* (Hear, hear.)

* Referring to a block of Buildings to contain the whole establishment of Servants, with Clock Tower annexed,

There was in the first year a very slight and trifling deficit, but in the second year, with larger numbers, it was replaced, and since then I might sum up all financial statements with regard to the College by saying that it has been a thoroughly self-supporting institution, working with a balance. We started with a charge of £81 upon every member of the College, and I think I may say that charge has been practically lowered since we began, for although now it stands at the same figure yet the rise in the price of meat, coals, &c. has been so great, as all who have anything to do with household economy know, that it makes a serious difference in working a place like this, and £81 in 1873 is a very different figure from £81 in 1870. (Hear, hear.)

Passing to the second point, whether we § 5. b. Staff could obtain persons competent and willing to work as Tutors, I confess that in that I myself apprehended the very greatest difficulty. There was a special need in the matter, for if the College was to succeed it was necessary not merely to matriculate a certain number of persons to become members of the University, and then give them some crumbs of education, but to give them a College education of the old kind, with all the range and variety of teaching necessary to help them to read for the honour schools and so forth. But although there was thus a begun in 1872 and almost finished, at a cost of £3,011, mainly supplied from the Sustentation Fund.

special need for a thoroughly efficient staff, there was and is a special difficulty in the way. I mean that in the ordinary working of other Colleges the income derived from a Tutorship is practically very much increased from the fact that the holder is also the holder of a Fellowship, therefore the Tutorships of Keble laboured under the great disadvantage of having no Fellowships to which they could be attached; and considering that all over Oxford there is a great demand for fit and able men, and outside the University great attractions to draw them away, I think I may say it was a matter for very grave apprehension whether we could get such persons as were needed; yet by the special blessing of Almighty God we have been able to do so. And may I venture further to flatter myself and the friends of the College, that it is due in part to the principles of the College, and the truth which it represented, that it has been enabled to lay hold on the hearts of the abler and more devout sons of the rising generation? I have been enabled to gather around me not only a Bursar, whose past experience in other places has enabled him to work this place in the way of which I have already given you some account, but also five Tutors. Of these, three have perhaps been enabled to take their Tutorships owing to their being Fellows of other societies, and on behalf of the College I should like to acknowledge in public the great thanks which are due to the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, and the

Principal and Fellows of Jesus College, for the courtesy and kindness by which they facilitated the arrangements by which those three gentlemen were enabled to join us. Two other gentlemen were found willing to hold Tutorships without the addition of a Fellowship. And of these gentlemen, although speaking on our own ground and in their presence I must not say much about them, yet I should like to state this: I think I can courageously say that I have a staff which no College in Oxford, if it happened to possess it, need be ashamed of; and I can say with sincerity that the practical result is that I can answer to every one who asks me the question, that I am prepared to receive in this place young men of whatever ability and whatever promise, because I am sure that by the teaching in this place we can do him justice and make the most of him. (Hear, hear.)

In the third place, there was the difficulty whether we should get men to fill the College. Would men dare to come to a Society which was yet unformed, and to buildings which had never been filled? Well, in October 1870, 30 gentlemen, whose names and characters will always live in my memory, were brave enough to venture on the task. (Hear, hear.) In October, 1871, the number had risen to 63; in October, 1872, to 81; and at this moment we have 86 Undergraduate members. But if I say that this is something, then when I add that if the College is to carry out its purpose it must have a high standard in matri-

§ 6. c Undergr-
duates.

culatation, and only admit persons fully able to pass the University examinations without difficulty, and that we have acted consistently on this plan, those numbers become a still more significant fact. (Hear, hear.) We have kept so high a standard throughout the matriculation examinations that persons are accusing us of filling the College by competitive examination. I take this opportunity of saying in public and so far as my words can reach, that the College is not filled in that way, but that those parents have the precedence who first enter their sons' names, and who have thus a right to it so long, and only so long, as their sons are competent to avail themselves of the opportunity. (Hear, hear.) In the presence of members of the College I must not say much about their character or their quality, but I am sure they will forgive me for saying one or two things. In Christmas last, when all the Schools were going on, we had 53 men in the different Schools in the University, and we came out bearing with us 47 testamurs. (Hear, hear, and applause.) It is but bare justice to say this—that I believe the Undergraduate members of this College are not behind the Undergraduates of other Colleges in loyalty to the institution to which they belong, and I do not believe that if they were called upon to answer for themselves they would be found to say that they had been entrapped into what they had found to be a delusion. (Hear, and applause.) In these days when importance is attached to a fact

which ought to be a secondary one, it may be interesting to know that in the summer of last year we won more than one half of our cricket matches with other Colleges, and if I am informed aright by the experts of the character of the Eleven who are to enter the field this year, we are likely to win even a larger number. (Applause.) And I am sure that Colleges crowned with so many laurels of the past as Exeter, St. John's, and New College will forgive me if I allude for one moment to the fact that we have succeeded in passing their boats on the river. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Coming perhaps to more sober matters, I may mention that a considerable portion of those gentlemen I see behind me have been members of the great public schools of the country. (Hear, hear.) Out of our 86 members, for example, I believe seven came from a single public school—than which I know none more important—I mean Winchester College. (Applause.) I should like again to say, as I have said in other places, and on opportunities when I have been able to make myself heard, that members go from this place to all professions and destinations, contradicting the once prevalent bugbear that this College was to be nothing more than a clerical seminary.

Lastly, as to the remaining difficulty which I have referred to and put before you, namely, whether it was possible, in this day and in this place, to carry out the two especial objects for which the College was founded. Now those two

§ 7. d. Special Objects.
i. Economical Education.

especial objects were to give an Economical Education and a Religious Education. (Hear, hear.) Both were met with what I may call sceptical criticism. We were told it was impossible to attempt either. We were told in the first place that sumptuary laws were proverbially foolish, that it was impossible to resist fashions and habits, that in all Colleges persons would live in accordance with the standard of living dominant in Oxford. Yet I may say we have attempted to frame College rules with a view to a more simple and more economical kind of living here than elsewhere, and I do not believe the members of this College, in whose presence and under whose criticism I speak, regard us as tyrants or despots for having framed those rules. (Hear, hear.) Although, as you will understand, the real reasons for desiring to give economical education do not lie in things of which you would expect to find in the young the most keen perception—although they depend upon an intelligent appreciation of the circumstances of our age—of the great national needs which, as I say, the young will not be the first to perceive—still we do not find it hopeless to get our members to enter with us upon such considerations.

ii. Religious Education.

The next matter—whether we could give a special religious character to the College—is delicate ground, and not well suited for speaking of in such a public place as this. Before I say a word or two about it, however, I would remark

that I have no intention to contrast or compare this College with other Colleges or institutions in the University, therefore, in showing what we are trying to do in Keble, I leave out of account altogether whether or how far other Colleges are attempting to do similar work. It is but justice to those who have taken an interest in this place from the outset, to say that we do attempt here to give a religious education—by which I mean that we give religion the place of honour in our work and in our life, that we give our members something like the opportunities which they would have in religious homes, or as members of the congregation of a Church which provided instruction and afforded religious opportunities complete and thorough—that we recognise religion as an element in the bond which unites us, seniors with seniors, juniors with juniors, and seniors and juniors together, which unites us in one society :—that we look upon religion as a subject which is not a forbidden subject among to us, but upon which we may in a proper place and manner communicate one with another, and confirm and help one another. And if I may say one word about the character of the College in relation to the Church of England—what we call its Church character—I cannot forget the prediction that it was to be the College of a clique or party. I must say with thankfulness that looking back I believe we have found it possible, or at least in some measure possible, to realise what we set before ourselves. We ventured

to believe, and I think we have found it true, that if our work, by God's help, was hearty and real, if it were seen to be based on clear and Catholic principles, and that we are not ashamed to avow them;—if it were seen that we were striving to give a proper place to the different sources and parts of our faith, for example, to the authority of the Church and to Holy Scripture—and to recognise the comparative importance between principles and details, between inward and spiritual truths of religion and the external accessories by which they are set forth, not neglecting either, but keeping what is secondary secondary, and not allowing it to engross too much space—then, I say, we venture to think, and I believe we have found it true, that if we did so we might appeal successfully to our own members and to the members of the Church at large;—that we might ask some to bear patiently with the omission of externals which to them are satisfactory and agreeable, but which to others among our brethren may appear strange and give pain,—that we might claim from others, on the other hand, not to take objection to things which they perhaps do not enter into or understand, but which are dear to the hearts of some of their fellows. In this way I believe we have been able in some measure to carry all along together in the spirit of hearty, united religious life, already loyal members of our mother Church of England, and ready to go out and further God's honour in the offices of the Church, or in the ordinary work of citizens of the State.

I have kept the meeting already, perhaps, too long—(hear, hear)—but I think I have said all that I meant to say, having touched, I believe, on the more important points with regard to the past of the College. With regard to its future I have not very much to which to ask your attention. But I must explain that when I spoke of the College as being a thoroughly solvent and self-supporting institution, I did not mean to say we had no further need of the support of English Churchmen. At present its revenues are utterly unassisted by endowments, and there is a want for instance of such buildings as a Common Hall, a Library, Lecture Rooms, &c. With regard to College extension I do not think that is a matter in which the College ought to be expected itself to take the keenest interest. At present we are a very happy and comfortable society. (Hear, hear.) After the long vacation we shall number nearly 100 men, and with that number we shall be happy and content to go on working for many years to come. It rests not with us but with the members of the Church of England at large, to decide whether they wish the College to undertake the additional labour and the additional responsibility—whether from what they have been enabled to learn from experience and information, they accept the College as an institution which will do more good if its size is larger. (Hear, hear.) It rests with them to decide whether they will press upon the accommodation

§8. Present wants of the College –
i. College Extension for larger numbers.

for their sons so much that it will be desirable for them to provide the means for enlarging it. That was the footing, soberly and really, of the question of College extension. If English Churchmen require any large amount of the article which we are able to supply, I think we may undertake, within limits, to say that we are willing to supply it if the necessary machinery is given, and bricks and mortar are supplied to house their sons. (Hear, hear.) With those remarks I will leave the question of College extension to the public and to English Churchmen.

ii. Public Buildings—
Hall
Library
Warden's
Lodge.

With regard to the public buildings to which I have alluded, I cannot take so unselfish and disinterested a line. There is no question but that those who are working here would rather have buildings such as those which are common in Oxford, than such as those which line the other side of the quadrangle, to do their work in.* But the three years work that has been done is quite insufficient in its amount to deserve anything like the encouragement we have already received, and which we are met this day to celebrate.

Mr. Gibbs' example.

We did not deserve to hear in our second long vacation that a gentleman had come forward in the simplest manner, offering to build a Chapel—(applause)—for us, the very one of all the common buildings which we most desired. Mr. Gibbs

* Referring to the low and ugly line of buildings which contains the temporary Hall and Chapel.

(applause) has offered to build it in such a way and in such a character that it shall yield to no other in Oxford in point of splendour. (Applause.) I tender thanks to Mr. Gibbs on the part of myself, of all those connected with the government and management of the College, and of every member of it, as well as the thanks of those friends who are met in sympathy. Though the words are insufficient, I tender him our deepest and most heartfelt thanks. (Applause.) I know very well it is not to these thanks that Mr. Gibbs looks most. (Hear, hear.) I will only say further about him that I pray, and I trust many who are present will also pray, not this day only, that in the way Mr. Gibbs looks for his reward he may have it. (Hear, hear.) Well, encouragement of this kind is substantial help which no one can over estimate in conducting the work of a place like this. (Hear, hear.) You must not think me presumptuous or covetous if I say that from time to time we shall be willing to receive further encouragement of this kind. (Applause.) For those benefactors whom Mr. Gibbs may have outstripped (laughter), and whom he may have deprived of the opportunity of carrying out their laudable desires, have still a large sphere in which to exercise their liberality. There are at least two public buildings which benefactors who wish to have individual credit in the College may undertake upon their sole responsibility (laughter and applause), and those persons who in this

domestic nation are fond of domesticity may take compassion upon the Warden (laughter)—though I confess I claim no compassion for my present lodgment (hear, hear)—and build him a very comfortable and substantial house. (Laughter and applause.) Those things on a large scale are open to the public. (Hear, hear.)

iii. Scholarships.

There is a matter which might seem small to you, being one of technical detail, but which to me is an important one, and that is the question of Scholarships, to be offered for competition, so that they may be open to men who are capable of doing us thorough credit in University Examinations. We know very well that the number of our Honours in these Examinations will be a test by which we shall be judged : and people will form their opinion in this way, even to an unfair degree, upon the powers of our staff—unfair, I mean, because Tutors cannot make people do more than they are capable of doing. But that test will be applied, and therefore it is most important to the College to be enabled to give open Scholarships, so as to give us a fair share of men capable of gaining distinction in University Examinations. We are giving them this year by a considerable effort, and I hope we shall not be left unsupported in that particular, but that persons will come forward and give us help on a larger or smaller scale to enable us to give Scholarships each year. (Hear, hear.) But whatever form of encouragement Churchmen may think it right to give, I may say this, that if the

§ 9. Conclusion.

College receives it, or indeed whether it receives it or not, we will do our best to go on in what we now believe, the more because we have tried it, to be a practical, reasonable and truly religious undertaking, as it certainly was in its conception and in its original commencement a bold and noble-hearted one. (Applause.)

LORD BEAUCHAMP then proceeded to address the assembly. He said it would be presumptuous on his part to attempt to add anything to what the Warden had said, but it had been thought that as one who had the welfare of the College deeply at heart from the time when it was first suggested, he should take the opportunity of congratulating the Warden on the success that had attended its opening years and on the care and trouble he had bestowed upon the College, but that he should also, on the part of the Council, repeat what had fallen from the Warden, their sense, their deep appreciation of that most munificent act on the part of Mr. Gibbs which had been the means of summoning them there that day. (Hear, hear.) He thought he was not saying anything but the coldest of terms when he said that it was one of the noblest of offerings offered to Almighty God in that or other generations. He hoped it would be deeply cherished in years to come, and that among the roll of benefactors the name of Gibbs would be for generations honoured and cherished in that College. (Applause.) He could not but reflect

on the very short time that had elapsed since they were summoned to lay the first stone of the College; he could not but reflect on the shorter time that had elapsed since they met to install the Warden, and he must say nature itself had given them the opportunity of testing the value of the friendship of the friends of the College. They all knew the old fable of the difference between the sun and the wind, which might be summed up in the few words, "never discard your principles." Those who remembered the blazing sun which poured down upon them three years ago, when they met to install the Warden, were struck with the admirable manner in which those who took part in the proceedings stuck to their post, and it seemed that on the present occasion nature had seemed inclined to test whether their fair weather friends would forego the opportunity afforded them of being present.* He recognised many present who were there three years ago, and he hoped he might take it as a favourable augury in the history of the College—that their friendship was not merely a sunshine friendship but that it stood the sterner test of adversity. (Hear, hear.) He must say from experience—and he thought domesticity was a very distinguishing feature in that College—that as long as the finances were conducted with the prudence with which they had been hitherto, and the religious and

* It was one of the bitterest East winds of the year.

educational teaching conducted in the same admirable manner, so long he thought they might have the sunshine which had shone upon them, and look for a continuance of their prosperity. He could not refrain from remembering, that which they also recollected, the great doubts and difficulties which were suggested in the Council when the foundation of that College was first designed. The experiment of endeavouring to substitute for the more luxurious habits in other Colleges a more moderate style of living had been more than once tried in Oxford with success. It must not be forgotten that they had taken up the experiment and entered into the labours of those who had gone before, and that they thought the experiment might be supplemented by another on a larger scale. From what they had seen they thought the experiment they had endeavoured to make, namely, that of conducting university and academical life in a manner more economically and more frugally than in other Colleges, ought to be tried on a larger scale. He was sanguine enough to hope that their present accommodation might be doubled in size. "*Dimidium facti qui bene cœpit habet.*" But if they had done well they did not think they had done half their work. (Hear, hear.) He spoke at that moment only of the material fabric. There was much to be done, but no doubt if those who perused a report of those proceedings would lay to heart those words which

had fallen from the Warden, he trusted that what he (Lord Beauchamp) had ventured to hint at would be fulfilled at no distant day, that the munificent example set by Mr. Gibbs would be followed by others, although not on the same large and generous scale. Recurring again to the meetings of the Council, which preceded the formation of the College, he could not forget the circumstances under which it was founded. They made a very bold step indeed when they associated that College with the name of a honoured and typical representative of Oxford—a typical representative of its highest form of intellectual cultivation which had made the name of Oxford venerated throughout the world, but he thought that in the name they had given it they very much diminished the burden of those who were to administer the fortunes of that Society. (Hear, hear.) He tendered his hearty thanks to those who took an early part in the foundation of the College. He also tendered his sincere congratulations to the Warden and Staff for having done what was far more difficult than building material walls—raising a moral fabric, a tone and an *esprit de corps* which reflected the highest credit upon them. (Applause.) He once more congratulated them most heartily on so successful a termination, and he trusted that when they assembled to celebrate the opening of the Chapel they might do so under circumstances as prosperous, or still more

prosperous, than those on which they had to congratulate themselves upon on that occasion. (Applause.)

This concluded the proceedings, and the company separated.





